

O D E

TO

THE REV. MR. MASON,

by Eliza Ryves

[Price 1s.]

E

D

C



THE BRITISH MUSEUM

1850

O D E

T O

THE REV. MR. MASON.

L

DANGER, and Death, the dread alarms
That scowl around a falling state,
Nor civil feuds, nor hostile arms,
Nor Tyranny's oppressive weight,
Can tame the free-born mind that draws
Its glory from a just applause,
Or bend its stubborn virtue down,
To court the favouring glance, or shun the stern indignant
frown.

II. Tho'

II.

Tho' Victory waves her crimson wings
Triumphant o'er th' embattled foe,
Each death-defying warrior springs
With force collected to the blow;
And while aghast the timid band
Of Pleasure's fluttering vot'ries stand,
A bolder energy they feel,
And with redoubled ardour grasp the keen avenging
steel.

III.

Thus high aloft when clouds deform
Yon azure heavens, the bird of Jove
Plumes his bold pinions in the storm,
And proudly scorns the sheltering grove:
For not beneath the flowery spray,
His new-fledg'd wings were taught to play,
But from the rock-built aerie's height,
On thunder-driving blasts to dart their uncontrolled
flight.

IV. Nor

IV.

Nor sordid Hope, or slavish Fear,
 Or Flattery's sweetly-soothing smile,
 Or lures from Favour's glittering sphere,
 Their steady souls can e'er beguile;
 The high-plum'd trappings they deride,
 Of new-blown Honour's bloated pride,
 And thro' the loftier paths of Fame,
 Where rang'd their great Patrician Sires, at lasting glory
 aim.

V.

Such were the sons of Albion seen,
 When bursting from a hostile yoke,
 Led on by an insulted Queen*,
 The Romans bow'd beneath their stroke:
 And tho' by Fate compell'd to yield,
 They left the well-disputed field,
 Each toil-proof Hero unsubdu'd,
 And panting with redoubled rage, th' unequal war pur-
 sued.

* BOADICEA.

VI. To

VI.

To Freedom's cause severely true,
 They brav'd the phalanx'd veteran train;
 With frantic zeal to slaughter flew,
 Nor unrevenge'd press'd the plain.
 While Victory astonish'd stood,
 'Midst hills of carnage, seas of blood,
 Nor dar'd to grasp the doubtful prey,
 Tho' low beneath her trophy'd car BRITANNIA'S glory
 lay.

VII.

Thus rough from Nature's forming hand,
 Like diamonds glowing from the mine,
 Our hardy Sires recorded stand,
 And stern in savage virtue shine.
 To twang the bow, to dart the spear,
 To guide aloft the flying car,
 To stem the torrent's foaming tide,
 Or with the sounding thong inflame the racer's generous
 pride.

VIII. These

VIII.

These were the manly sports they knew ;
 By these their finewy limbs were strung,
 And, nurs'd in arms, to vigour grew,
 Firm as the chiefs from whom they sprung.
 Nor did the Muse, harmonious maid,
 Disdain to haunt their acorn'd shade,
 But oft amidst the Druid quire,
 She hymn'd the war-slain Hero's praise to her immortal
 lyre.

IX.

Yet trembling, oft she dropp'd the shell,
 And half unfinish'd left her song,
 Scar'd from the dark remorseless cell,
 When fierce-eyed Fury lash'd her thong :
 Or when on WODEN's rock-rais'd shrine,
 The hopes of many a glorious line,
 For virtue, and for arms renown'd,
 The victims of misguided Zeal, his blood-stain'd altars
 crown'd.

B

X. From

X.

From reeking groves to rural shades,
 By Druid rituals undefil'd,
 Calm vales, and pine-incircled glades,
 She fled, a blushing wood-nymph wild ;
 'Till Peace her olive sceptre sway'd,
 And back recall'd the wandering maid,
 To tune her melting lute again,
 And temper Virtue's rigid soul with feelings more humane!

XI.

Soon infant Science rear'd her head,
 The clash of arms was heard no more ;
 No more the hostile sails were spread,
 To waft invasion to the shore.
 Great ALFRED, father of his Isle,
 Badè Arts arise, and Commerce smile ;
 While bending to his gentle yoke,
 The realm by petty tyrants torn, its feudal fetters
 broke*.

XII. Yet

* Though the heptarchy had been dissolved more than forty years before
 the

XII.

Yet half subdued, ~~the~~ Gothic horde,
 Unaw'd by weaker sceptres, came;
 Again they lift the conquering sword,
 Again their Pagan altars flame:
 While unprotected Science fades,
 Obscurely sunk in monkish shades,
 Nor dares unfold her towering plumes,
 Immers'd in Slaughter's sanguine streams, and Supersti-
 tion's glooms.

the accession of Alfred, and Egbert dignified with the title of King of Eng-
 land; yet as some, if not all the petty kings, though tributary to Egbert, pre-
 served some shadow of their ancient power, the government might still be
~~called~~ called a feudal one. And as the sovereign authority became more exten-
 sive, as well as the empire more enlarged, in the reign of Alfred, than it had
 been under any of his predecessors, the author thinks herself justifiable in speak-
 ing of him as founder of the English monarchy.

XIII.

'Till bright ELIZA's happier reign,
From papal power emerging, rose,
Dispers'd the cloister's dronish train,
And rous'd her from her dull repose:
Then glow'd with more than Attic fire,
Great SHAKESPEAR's soul-commanding lyre;
And Truth divine, from SPENSER's tongue,
Diffus'd her sacred precepts, couch'd in allegoric song.

XIV.

Then flourish'd many a glorious name,
To fire the rapture-breathing Muse,
And lift her to those heights of fame,
The venal Bard in vain pursues.
For such the just decrees of Jove,
The flowery wreaths by Falsehood wove,
Soon withering lose their gaudy prime,
While Truth's fair garlands mock the blasts of Envy, and
of Time.

XV.

Nor shall the flattering Minstrel claim
 A Poet's praise, whose sordid views
 Absorbs the Muse's generous flame,
 In Adulation's blighting dews.
 Mark o'er time-serving WALLER's tomb,
 How faint the tarnish'd laurels bloom.
 Mark DRYDEN's loftier genius bend,
 Repentant of that servile part distress can ill de-
 fend.

XVI.

Then turn to yon majestic shrine,
 Where MILTON's awful bust displays
 Impartial Candour, Truth divine,
 Inform'd by Judgment's bright'ning rays.
 Turn, and revere his honour'd shade,
 Who no inglorious aims betray'd,
 But firm, and resolutely just,
 Defy'd Ambition's gilded baits, or Passion's wavering
 gust.

XVII. Abash'd!

XVII.

Abash'd! ye slaves whose hireling rhymes
 Pollute celestial Virtue's name,
 Or vindicate a Villain's crimes,
 Or fan Sedition's dangerous flame;
 There drop your prostituted style,
 Nor e'er for purposes so vile
 Presume to stain the sacred page,
 With specious Flattery's glossing lies, or Envy's ran-
 corous rage.

XVIII.

Yet while by Falshood's impious quire
 Debas'd, the blushing Muse complains,
 On MASON's truth-directed lyre
 She breathes her purest, chastest strains;
 Round DARCY's bower the palm she rears,
 For *^xCA'NDISH civic wreaths prepares,
 And bids her favourite Bard resume
 The plaufive song, that erst proclaim'd his virtues
 opening bloom.

* Lord JOHN CAVENDISH.

+ See Mr. Mason's Elegy to a Young Nobleman (Lord John Cavendish) on his leaving the University

XIX.

" Renounce (she cries) the rural reed,
 " Tho' sweetly elegant its strains,
 " A nobler theme 's for thee decreed
 " Than shady groves, and blooming plains:
 " To Virtue's soul-inspiring praise,
 " Exalt the animated lays,
 " And with a master's glowing hand,
 " Awake the Lyre's responsive chords majestically=
 grand."

F I N I S.

~~PROPOSALS~~

~~A second volume of~~

~~POEMS~~

~~And with a matter's hand~~

~~DESIGN~~

~~CONDITIONS.~~

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| I. The Poem shall be neatly | will be Five Shillings, to be |
| printed in One Volume of | paid at the Time of Subscribing. |
| two. | II. The Names of the Sub- |
| II. The Price to the Subscribers | scribers shall be |

~~SUBSCRIPTIONS~~ will be received by J. DODDLEY,
in the Street.